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2011 Garden to Table Mini-grant Requirements

Overview:

The purpose of this mini-grant is to actively engage children in gardening and preparing and tasting fresh produce. Applying techniques for extending the growing season is also encouraged. You are asked to evaluate carefully with pre- and post-tests to check that children are increasing in knowledge and awareness of fruits and vegetables and how to bring them from the garden to the table. The mini-grant should be used to support interaction with others who grow produce for consumption such as farmers and produce growers and to communicate with local farmers/producers to create a Farm to School partnership. Up to \$500 may be awarded for a garden to table project at your school or agency. It is acceptable to request smaller amounts. A resource toolkit with lessons and tips will be provided.

Minigrant Requirements:

- School or agency must participate in one of the USDA Child Nutrition Programs
- Schools that apply must be enrolled in Team Nutrition
- All activities and expenses must support and promote participation in child nutrition programs
- A report summarizing the activities must be completed at the end of the grant period
- One or both of the following Team Nutrition behavior strategies must be part of the work plan and objectives:
 1. Promote nutrition curriculum and education in schools, childcare centers, childcare homes or after school programs through multiple communication channels to reinforce positive nutrition messages and encourage students to make healthy food and physical activity choices as part of a healthy lifestyle.
 2. Build school, center, child care home and community support for creating healthy environments that are conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

Time frame:

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| December 1, 2011 | Grant application must be postmarked |
| January 1, 2012 | Notification of whether grant was approved |
| January 1, 2013 | Grant activity completed |
| February 1, 2013 | Final report including summary, evaluations, and receipts |

Supplies that may be included in the budget:

Seeds, potting soil, starter pots, starter plants such as tomato plants
A few shovels, hoes and other gardening hand tools
A few fruits and vegetables may be purchased for practicing food preparation skills while the garden is growing or to complete a recipe that is mostly fruits and vegetables (include recipes and supplies list)
Supplies for constructing cold frames, hoop structures, grow light stands, etc. to extend the growing season
Funds for field trips to farms and farmer's markets or farmer/growers to come to speakers at the agency
Copying costs for pre/post tests and for educational materials used in the classroom to teach about gardening
Other supplies may be allowed on a case by case basis but must be approved prior to spending any funds

Minigrant funds unallowable expenses:

Bulk soils such as topsoil may not be purchased
Irrigation supplies may not be purchased
Fencing may not be purchased
Pesticides and herbicides may not be purchased

Large equipment such as a tiller or greenhouse may not be purchased
Flowers may not be purchased unless they repel pests (such as marigolds) and are used in the garden
Trees may not be purchased
No costs of meals or reimbursable snacks may be charged to the grant.

Selection Process:

All applications that meet the December 1, 2011 deadline and the requirements listed above will be considered for funding. If more applications are received than there is funding available, minigrants will be scored and awarded competitively based upon the following criteria:

- 25 points Quality of the project design
- 15 points Need for project
- 15 points Gardening project partners (businesses, Master Gardeners, parent teacher organizations, local SDSU Extension, farmer's market vendors, produce growers, etc.)
- 20 points Education activities that will promote fruits and vegetables and garden to table
- 20 points Budget appropriateness
- 5 points Presentation (typed, relatively concise, understandable, and complete)

Points will be given on how well the grant proposal meets the following criteria:

Quality of the project design

- Proposal clearly describes the project goals and at least 3 objectives; project is well designed
- Project has potential for a positive impact
- Team members have the knowledge and skills to do the activities planned
- Project has multiple components and repeated lessons for the same children
- Project has a clear timeline
- Signed by the authorized person

Need for the project:

- Data is presented specific to the school or area
- Needs statement makes a strong case for why the grant is needed

Gardening project partners

- A variety of agency staff are participating such as food service director, teacher, principal, secretary, school nurse, and school counselor
- Parents will be involved
- A farmer/producer is engaged that will work with the agency
- A master gardener or Extension Field Specialist is engaged to work with the agency
- Other community members such as registered dietitians, registered nurses, physicians, senior citizens, business owners, retired farmers, etc. have agreed to help with the project.

Education activities

- Classroom activities promote fruits and vegetables such as taste testing, food preparation, and student projects
- Educational lessons on health benefits of fruits and vegetables are offered in multiple classrooms and multiple grade levels or to all students at the agency
- Education is given on gardening principles and/or plant science
- Students actively participate in the gardening process from planning to serving
- Students travel to a farm or farmer's market to learn about how produce goes from garden to table
- A pre- and post-test on knowledge and awareness will be given to all students who have been significantly involved with the project

Budget appropriateness

- Budget includes detailed itemization of expenses
- Budget reflects expenditures that directly support proposed activities
- Budget includes only allowable expenses
- The math is correct and expenses are reasonable

Presentation

- Typed, no spelling errors, concise, easy to read, and grammatically correct
- Organized well and understandable
- Complete

Late applications will lose points

Instructions:

1. Determine if you will be able to have a garden, planters/tubs, or container garden. Look to city or county partners for a place for the garden if you do not have a spot for a garden at your school or agency. Perhaps you have space along a building wall for some planters or tubs in which to have a container garden at school, or perhaps you have a container garden on a cart that can roll from class to class.
2. Form a gardening team to divide the work of the project. Connect with local gardening experts such as Master Gardeners who may join your team. Talk to your local agriculture offices such as Farm Service Agency, Soil Conservation, and SDSU Extension/4H offices to see if they are aware of any opportunities in your area for partnership with agricultural organizations or businesses.
3. Consider talking to local businesses to see if they would partner with you for supplies that cannot be purchased with the grant such as fencing to keep out rabbits and irrigation equipment. If a store or business knows that you will give them some publicity, they might be more likely to help you as it would be a win/win situation for both of you.
4. Review the Farm to School website (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/f2s/>) to gather ideas for a possible partnership between the school food service department and local farms.
5. Meet as a team and design your gardening project: A) include a time line of when each activity needs to be completed and costs for each component of the activity making sure that the budget items fit within the guidelines of acceptable costs (see budget page of grant as well as unallowable costs above). B) Plan procedure for a pre- and post-evaluation and choose a test group of children who will receive repeated exposure to the lessons and the garden. A variety of tools for evaluation will be made available.
6. Make a copy for yourself and send the original plus three copies to:
Karlys Wells, Team Nutrition, SWG 212 Box 2275A, Brookings, SD 57007. It must be postmarked by December 1, 2011.

Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis. Minigrant money will be reimbursed to the school or agency upon receipt of the final report at the end of the grant period. The final report must include a survey, pre/post evaluation results, as well as documentation of expenses with receipts.

Contact Child and Adult Nutrition Services at 605-773-3413 if you have questions about the minigrant application and allowable expenses. To learn more about connecting with SDSU Extension and a Master Gardener for your agency, please contact Karlys Wells at 605-688-4039 or karlys.wells@sdstate.edu.

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